A SERMON PREA-

ched at Torceter, in the Countie of Northampton the 8. of Iune, Anno Dom. 1588. at the visitation of the right reuerend Father in God, the Bishop of Peeterborow,

BY *IOHN BEATNIFFE*
Preacher of the woord of God
in Brackley.

2. Cor. 22. 28.

Beside the thinges which are outward I am cumbred daily, and I haue a care ouer all the Churches.

LONDON.
Printed by Iohn Charlewood
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BRITISH MUSEUM

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To the moſt reuerend Father in God, my Lords grace, Archbiſhop of Caterbury: Sir *Chriſtopher Hatton* knight, Lord high Chauncellor of England: Sir *William Cecil* Knight Lord Burleigh, Lord high Treaſurer of England: Sir *Chriſtopher Wray* Knight, Lord chiefe Iuſtice of England: and to al other which ſincerely fauour the word of God, Grace and Peace be multiplied in Ieſus Chriſt.

AMongeſt the manifold calamities and griefes of hart that fall vppon the Church in this old age of the world (right Honorable and welbeloued in the Lord) this is not the leaſt, that the peace of the Church, is daily broken in peeces, and that by ſuch as chalenge to themſelues the name of the Churche, which crie as did the Iewes, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord: but I feare me, be as Chriſt ſayeth, The Ier. 7. 4.

congregation of Sathan, for they
Reue.2.9. Iude. 5.8. 2. Tim, 1.4. dispise Rulers, and speake euill of such as be in authority. They delight in questions and endles genealogies, which gender strife rather then Godly edyfying, which is in Faith. These men as they trouble the publique State of the Church, with Schismes: so doe they also disquiete, the consciences of many good Soules by making doubts and ambiguities in matters that be most plaine and easie. They draw so many as they can frō obedience of the Godly Magistrate, denouncing all those to be execrable, cursed and abhominable; which bee not of their faction, yea they be growen to such grosnesse, which they call Puritie, that as they say, they dare not defile their cleane vndefiled and regenerat Soules, by ioyning in Praier with such as hold of the reformed state of

this Realme. So by this means they deface so much as in them is our Church, our Ministery, our Orders, and Praiers in the Church. That which they say is good, that order which they obserue is godly howsoeuer it bee: they dislike all others but themselues and their followers. But what is this? truly euen the verie practise of the false apostles in the time of *Paul*: for they to maintaine gentilisme among the people, defaced *Paul*, and made them beleeue that hee was not the apostle of Christ: euen so these men by the instigation of Satan, to ouerthrow our Church and the godly gouernment thereof, disgrace *Paul*, and deface our Preachers, and al to wound weake consciences, and to make cõmendable themselues & their newfangled deuises. This their siniſter dealing hath done, yea and doth at

this day much harm in the church: for besides the thinges forenamed, it hindereth many good and godly men from dooing that good which they would. I considering with my self of the disposition of these men, of their manners and marke which they shoot at, being by authority called to preach at a visitation of the right reuerende Father in God the Bishop of Peeterborrow, did there as the time then serued my office, & the nature of my Text required resolutely defende that which they so greatly dislike, that is, our church and Ministerie, the order of our excommunication, and our praiers. Since which time, I haue bin often greatly vrged by dyuers good men, & many of my welwillers to make it publique for the benefite of the whole Church. Seeing their request to be reasonable, and that my office

bindeth

bindeth me not onlie, exhortari per sanam doctrinam, but also cotradicere maledicentibus: I have satisfied their honest request, and suffered it to bee published. Most humblie craving that your Honors, and all others which favor the Gospell, and this our godlie goiuerment vnder our most gratious Soueraigne, to patronize and defende the same, so shall I and others, be the more encouraged to execute our offices in the Church. Titus 1. verse 9.

The Lord who is the onelie giuer of auctoritie protect and defende your Honours, to the glorie of his name and the benefite of this common wealth.

Most desirous of your Honors prosperitie,

Io. Beatniffe.

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THE TEXT.

1. Peter. Cap 5.2.

Feede yee the Flocke of God.

The holie Ghost by the Apostle S. Peter in these words read vnto you (welbeloued in the Lord,) doth set down a commaundement to all Pastours & Ministers, to all those which have cure and charge of soules committed vnto them, diligently and faithfully to feede the flocke of God.

In saying feede the flocke metaphorically hee exhorteth his fellowe labourers, vnto whome he speaketh to teach the Church and people of God, with sounde and wholesome doctrine: now, whereas the holy Ghost vseth so many figures in so fewe wordes, hee sheweth what manner of man he would have o

uer

uer his flocke, what manner of men hee would haue to teach his Church: that is to say, such as be well acquainted with his speeches, such as be learned in the tongues, and thereby be able, not only to exhort with wholsome doctrine but also to couince and stop the mouthes of aduersaries, and with facilitie find out the wrettings and false enterpretations of subtil enemies: which doctrine of the holy ghost, doth impugne & is fully against all those, whatsoeuer they bee. What countenaunce soeuer they carie, which would perswade, or beare the worlde in hand, that they be able soundly to teach, and utterly to conuince all erroninous doctrine, Anabaptisticall factions, and Papisticall opinions, and that without art: but what do these men? Verily nothing, but euen tread vnder their feete the excellent gifte of God: I mean learning, which is of ordinary meane, which God in his wisedom, hath appointed to true preaching. They set themselues vnto idlenes, and so through their want of skill, (being set forward through a blind zeale)

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zeale) they breede iarres in GODS Church, and thereby greeue the Spirite of God, by whome the Children of God are sealed, vnto the day of redemption.

Feede, 1. Metaphorically teach, out of the which word of the Apostle, there be foure thinges to be considered. First, the care that God hath ouer his Church Second, who they muste be, that muste feede. Third, with what they must feed. Foure, what they muste feede.

Where the holy Ghost by his Apostle sayth, feede: I gather that he pretendeth a care ouer his Church, which appeareth herein, that he doth not onelie prepare food, but also giueth commandement, that it may be destributed in due and equall manner, & procureth meanes from time to time, as I may say by succession, which will faithfully doe and accomplish their Masters message.

This is moste apparant, for when God had chosen his Church, the seede of Abraham, the chosen Israell: he did not onely giue them a Lawe, as a Rule to leade them by, and a direction whereby they

they might walke, the bounds whereof they shoulde not passe: but also, hee sent forth his seruants the Prophets, whom he did endue with the spirite of Prophecie and trewe vnderstanding, which shoulde rise vp early and late to teach Israell the sayde Lawe: which shoulde threaten the people with the iudgments of God for their transgressions, which shoulde call them to repentaunce, and comfort them in their afflictions: and at the last he sent the trew Prophet, euen his Sonne Jesus Christ, to teach hys Church, and to gather together the dispearsed. This proueth the Apostle S. Paul in these wordes. Diuersly and many waies in times past, spake God vnto the Fathers, by Prophets: but last of all in these dayes, hath hee spoken to vs by his Sonne, whom he hath made heire of all thinges: By whom also he made the worlde.

Heb. 1. 1.

This Jesus in lyke manner, shewed his care ouer the Church: for as Luke sayth. Hee went about through euerie Cittie and euerie Towne, teaching, and

Luk. 13. 22.

making

making his iourney towards Ieruſalem. He trauailed from place to place, and by the way as he went, he fedde the people, he taught and declared his Fathers will vnto them: more then that, that his foode might more amply bee destributed, and this doctrine more liberally be taught, he chose certaine whome hee called Disciples, and sent them abroade into all the worlde, and commaunded them to teach all nations. Math. 10. 18

After his resurrection he said to Peter. Louest thou me? More then these: feed my flocke. This he spake vnto him that time, thereby to signifie vnto Peter, the great and tender care that hee had ouer his purchased possession, which is hys Church. Iohn. 21. 15.

After his ascention, hee called Paul, that he might cary his name before the Gentiles, before kings, and before the Children of Israell: thereby shewing to vs, that as GOD had gathered his Church, of all estates and degrees of people: so, he would haue al estates and degrees of people to know his will, and

also

also haue matter to feede vppon, to the comfort of their soules: and therefore in deede Paul was very carefull ouer all congregations, and not onely taught diligently himselfe, but also elected and chose others for the same worke: as Timothie, vnto whom he gaue authority to rule the Church of God at Ephesus, and to feede them with wholesome doctrine.

1. Tim. 1. 3. As I besought thee to tarry at Ephesus, when I departed into Macedonia: so doe, that thou maiest commaund some that they teach no other doctrine, neither that they giue heede, to fables and genealogies which are endlesse, which breede questions, rather then any godly edifying which is by faith.

To the same effect, hee speaketh vnto his Scholler Titus, that he might see to the Church: For this cause left I thee in

Titus. 1. 5. Creta, that thou shouldest continue to redresse the thinges that remaine, and shouldest ordaine elders in euery congregation, as I appointed thee.

This care of God the Father, of his sonne Christ, and of his Apostles or predecessors,

ceſſors, do teach vs which haue cure of ſoules, to be diligent, paynfull and careſull. You looke now peraduenture, that I ſhoulde make ſome bitter inuectiue ſpeeches againſt Byſhops, which of ſome, are thought not to be ſo careful as their office requireth: but truely I am not ſo determined, for indeede they be reuerend fathers: Fathers of the Church, and they be bretheren. I came not hether to accuſe any, I loue it not, I leaue it to the deuill, *qui eſt accuſator fratrum*, which is the accuſer of his bretheren, and I will ſet it ouer to his adherents, which take pleaſure, and exercise themſelues therein day and night. I came hether to doo the office of a Preacher, to to teach the vnlearned, and to put the learned in minde, of thoſe things which they already knowe: and ſo will doe ſo long as I liue, if God permit.

Now it followeth to declare vnto you, who they be that muſt feede. The Apoſtle himſelfe in the firſt verſe of this Chapter declareth. The Elders ſayth he, I beſeech, which am alſo an Elder. Feede 2. 1.Pet.5.1.

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the flock of Christ. When he plainely speaketh to those, which haue the office of teaching, and administring of Sacraments, committed vnto them: and to such, as are thereunto ordinarily and lawfully called.

Ierom describeth vnto vs, foure sorts of calings. Some saith he, were called of God and not by men, as the Prophets and Apostles. Others were called of God, and by men: as Elizeus, by Elias. Others are called by men and not by God, which (seeing they haue an ordinary calling) they may not be reiected. Others there be, which are neyther sent by GOD nor man: these be the worst, these be Annabaptists, these runne of a blind zeale & take vppon them to preach without any warrant.

Of these callings one is necessary, that is, lawfully to be called by God and man, especially in this our time, wherin we liue vnder a Christian Magistrate, without whose authority (in my iudgement) it is not lawfull for any man to execute any office in Churches, common

wealth.

wealth. Calling therefore is not to bee despised, but to bee sought for: for it is not ynough to haue knowledge in the worde of God, and be able to teach, but also to haue calling by the Church, beeyond which it is not lawfull to go. Who so doth whatsoeuer hee thinketh of himselfe, Paul telleth him plainly what hee is: Euen such a one, of whome we must take heede. For they be dogges, euill labourers, and concision. They giue fayre wordes: but secretly they bite. They take greate paynes in trotting from house to house, in making long prayers, in visiting widdowes houses, in ouercomming the weake: but al is to breede factions, and to get gaynes vnto themselues. Phil. 3.

They call themselues circumcision, but the Apostle by a pleasant prosonomasia, calleth them concision, such as break and deuide the Church, & such as cut in peeces, the vnity and peace of the same. Of these sayth Ieremie: They did run, but I did not send them. Now then can they teach truely? they cannot: for the A- Ier. 23, 21.

postle Paul asketh this question. Howe
Rom.10.15. can they preach, except they be sent? as
though he should say they cannot. And
Tit.1.5. therefore he sayth to Titus. For this
cause haue I left thee in Creta, that thou
shouldest ordaine Elders in euery con-
gregation, as I haue appointed thee. As
though he shoulde say, least any shoulde
Heb.5.4 take vnto himselfe honour, but he that is
called: I haue left thee there for that
purpose.

They which haue this calling, God prospereth their labours: they which haue it not, (thoughe they haue the words of fayth in their mouth) yet they bring foorth no fruite, for they see not that which is good, but euen as it were to leade men by the eares, to their peruerse opinions.

Feede ye, heere is secondly noted vnto vs, who they bee that must feede the flocke of God: The elders saith S. Peter. The Greeke worde is ποιμανατε, Ioh.21.15. which the Apostle vseth: which word of two sortes of people is falsly interpreted. Of the Papists, which would haue

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it to signifie a sacrifising, or a massing Priest. Of an other sort, which woulde haue it onely to signifie Lay-men: but the Apostle heere confuteth them both, for he speaketh not of sacrifising preists, neither yet of lay men: but of such as shoulde guide and teach his Church, therefore the worde (Elders) signifyeth heere, Bishops & Ministers. Of whome the office of the first is, not only to teach, but also to rule the Church of God, to keepe it in with a Bishop-like authority: this Paul prooueth. Take heede vnto your selues, and to the whole flocke, ouer the which the holy Ghost hath made you ouerseeers, to rule the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his owne bloode. Out of which wordes I gather thus much, that of the one side, as a Bishop is not exempted from the office of teaching because hee is a Bishop: so, on the other side, hee is not called a Bishop, because he is apt to teach, neither for the office of teaching, but for the preheminence of ruling and ouerseeing of the Church of God: that false Act. 20.

doctrine come not in, that offenders, which corrupt the manners and peace of the Church, may bee punished, and such like. The office of the other is this, to teach and to administer the Sacraments: according to the saying of Christ generally to all ministers. Goe into all the worlde, teach all nations, and baptize them, in the name of the father, and of the sonne, and of the holie Ghost. Math. 28.

And Paul sayth: Preach thou the worde: bee feruent in season and out of season: reproue, rebuke & exhort with al loue patience & doctrine. The which places beeing with discretion considered of, are sufficient to proue, that as on the one side, calling is necessary: so, they which be called, must bee such as the Apostle heere speaketh of, (Elders) that is to say, Bishops to rule and to teach: Ministers, to teach, to administer, to rebuke and to exhort, where they be thereunto lawfully called.

3 (Feede ye) heere is thirdly to be noted with what they must feede: verily with the word, with it haue all the Prophets

fed

fed: that same is the nourishment of the Church. S. Peter sayth: We are borne agayne, not of corruptible seede, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, who liueth and endureth for euer. For all flesh is grasse, and the glory of man is as the flower of gras: the grasse withereth, and the flower falleth away, but the word of the Lord indureth for euer, and this is the worde which is preached among you. By which saying it is manifest that the onely word of God ought to be taught in the church, and that they are not to be heard which would bring in mens deuises into the Church: God hath not permitted so much to any mortall man: neither may the Church bee gouerned or fed by any other word then by the worde of God, by the which it is begotten and borne. 1.Pet.1.23.

This confuteth the Papists, which would haue the Church to be of greater authoritie then the word, which can not possibly be, for the Church is grounded vppon the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, Christ himselfe the head

corner stone: so that it is against the word, that the house, that is to say, the church, should rule the maister, that is to say, the word: and it is against nature that ẏ daughter namely the church should rule hir Mother, which is the word.

Hereuppon it followeth that the ministers must onely feede with the word of God, and with no other. God sayth, thou shalt heare words from my mouth, and thou shalt warne others from mee. I haue put my words in thy mouth, and what so euer I haue commaunded thee, that shalt thou speake, and did binde his Disciples to a certain kinde of doctrine, namely to teach those things which hee had commaunded them: whereby wee learn that onely the word of God must be taught in the Church, and no other. When I say that the only word of God must be taught, I do not therby as some do, condemne the reading or alledging of the Fathers, for that were altogether curiositie, I am not of that minde, I thinke them very necessarie to bee read

Eze, 3.17.

Ier. 1.7.

Math. 28.

and alledged, not as doctrine of saluatiõ, but as confirmation of iudgement: for when our iudgements, & the iudgements of the fathers are one, vpon some place of Scripture, then we say it is idem spiritus, one and the selfe same spirit: so that alledging of the Fathers is not to be blamed, but bringing in mans doctrine as necessarie to saluation, in stead of the woord of God, which onely serueth to that ende is woorthily to bee condemned: where it is said, feede, and that with the woord. There is rendred a reason, because the written woord of God containeth in it all things necessarie to saluation, and also to life and maners, and therefore that we neede not seek any further for the assurance of the same, this proueth Iohn the Apostle: Iohn.21. Many things did Iesus in the sight of his disciples which are not writtẽ in this booke, but these things are written, that Iesus Christ is the Sonne of God, & that in beleeuing yee might haue eternall life. The other proueth Paul: Euery 2.Tim.3. Scripture giuen by inspiration is profitable

table to teach, to reprooue, and to exhort, that the man of God may be made perfect vnto euerie good woorke.

Rom. 15. Therefore search the Scriptures, for in them yee hoope to haue eternall life.

4 Lastly it is to bee declared what they must feed, n. the Church. There be many sorts of Churches, there is a visible Church and an inuisible Church: there is a militant Church, and a triumphant Church: there is a true Church, & there is a false Church. Now where the Apostle saith, feede the flocke of God, hee putteth a difference betwixt the true & false Church: now a Church is nothing els but a company of people gathered together, so that euery company is a Church, but euery company is not a church of God. Moreouer this is to bee obserued, that wheras the Apostle saith feed the flock of God, and that the flock of God is partly visible, partly inuisible, as is aforesaid, that hee meaneth, that the ministers of the word should diligently feed all the flocke of God vppon the earth: which is flatly against those

that

that would ſingle out the church of God from the reſt, not knowing that there bee ſome which though they do not appeare outwardly, yet are they moſt dear and precious in the ſight of the Lord: I muſt bee plaine with you, it is a great fault in this our time, wee will haue none to be of the Church but ſuch as we like, ſuch as follow our fantaſies: & ſuch as will not, we vtterly condemne them, whereas there bee many hundreds, yea many thouſands beſides vs: this was Elias fault. O Lord ſaith he, they haue broken down thy Altars, and ſlaine thy Prophets, and I onely am left, and they ſeeke my life to take it away: he thought there had not bin left vpon the earth one man that feared God but himſelfe: but marke reſponſum Domini, harkē what the Lord ſaith: I haue reſerued to my ſelfe ſeuen thouſand men that neuer bowed their knees to Baal: mark this wel, there be more of the church then we bee aware of: therefore let vs feed in hope and labor in hope, incouraging all, diſcouraging none; but let vs feede the flocks

Reg. 19. 18.

of

of God visible and invisible, true & false.

Of these two Churches it is necessary to speake a litle, beginning with the false church, ý the other may be the better discerned: the false church I cal those which either openly set their selues against the childrē of God, or those which perswade themselues that they be of the church & are not: of both these sorts ther be many.

The one sort, are they of whom Dauid speaketh of. I haue hated the congregation of the wicked, and I wil not sit with the vngodlie. Such were Corah, Dathan and Abiram, and the two hundred and fifty men that were with them, men of renowne and famous in the congregation. Such were they that builded Babel: euery of these were a congregatiō, a church, but a false church, a church that openly fighteth and setteth it selfe against the Church of God. The other sort, are they, which bragge that they be the seed of Abraham, the children of promise, but they deceiue themselues, for they do not the works of Abraham, they speak much, but they do litle: they look

Psalm. 26.

Numb. 15.

Gene. 11.

like

like Lambes but they bee rauenning Wolues: outwardly they appeare bewtifull, but inwardly they be full of dead mens bones. He is not a Iew which is a Iew outward, but hee is a Iew which is hid within. Of these face-makers, and outward Religious persons speaketh Leo: Ecclesiæ nomine armamini, sed contra ecclesiam demicatis: yee arme your selues with the name of the church, but yee fight agaynst the Church. These say they are Iewes, but they are not, but are the congregation of Satan. These be the false church, these must be taught, if at any time God will giue them grace to repent, that they may be brought to the true church, and so be saued in the day of the Lord. Now let vs proceed vnto the true church, which is in God, hereby it is knowen, it is not in man, but in GOD, this is the true church, this is the society of all the true faithfull saintes and elect of God. This church consisteth of Faith, Hope, Loue, and of the Spirit of Christ. This we cal the catholicke church which is spread ouer

Rom. 2.

Leo.

Reg. 2. 9.

uer the face of the whole worlde. Then the catholicke church is not at Rome: no, no, they are much deceiued that say so, or beleeue so, it is not tyed to one place or to one people: but it is the company of all the faithfull, that haue bene from the beginning of ỹ worlde, that are now, & shalbe vnto the end of the worlde: Ieroim sayth Ecclesia Christi in toto orbe ecclesias possidens, spiritus vnitate coniuncta est, & habet vrbes legis & prophetarum, euangelij & apostolorum: non est egressa de finibus suis, i. de scripturis: The church of Christ which possesseth all the churches in the worlde, is ioyned together in the vnity of the spirit, and it hath the cities of the law and of the Prophets, of the Gospell, and of the Apostles, it doth not goe beyonde her boundes, that is the Scriptures.

This Church hath in it pure and sounde doctrine, euen the same which came from Christe, and sent abroade throughout all the worlde by the Apostles, which excludeth all other doctrines and precepts of man, it hath also

the

the true and liuely vse of the Sacraments, it hath vnity and catholicke consent touching the chief points of christian religion. This church (because it often erreth, sometime by ignorance as Paul before his conuersion, sometime by temptations as Abraham when for feare of his life he fel to dissembling, or by infirmitie, as Dauid when hee committed adulterie,) ought to bee fed with doctrine, and be kept in with wholsome correction. And therefore ouer this church hath God placed Bishops, and hath commaunded them to ouersee it, and to feed it faithfully and dilligently. let those therefore watch that they may giue their fellow seruants meat in due season. Blessed is that Seruant whome hys Maister shall find so doing. Verily I say vnto you, he will make him ruler ouer all his goods. Therefore feed ỹ flock, this appertaineth to vs ministers: God hath made vs pastors, and wee haue a flocke; euen a church in God the father, begotten of the word, born of the word, and now must be nourished, brought vp

1. Tim. 1. 13.

Gene. 20. 2.

2. Sam, 10. 4

Math. 24.

and

and instructed by the word.

That wee haue such a church here in England as I haue here described, there is no question at all to be made, neither do the godly doubt of it. But for the better comfort of the church, and that they may haue in a readines at all times to stop the mouth of the Anabaptist, to ouerthrow the Papist, and tread vnder feet the Sectarian. I wil proue it most plainly by the way of an argument, where the Gospell is truly preached, where the Sacraments be according to Christ his institution reuerently administred, where there is vnitie, and catholicke consente touching the cheefe points of christian religion, wher Christ is acknowledged the head of the church, there is the true church in God the Father: but the church of England hath, vseth, holdeth and acknowledgeth al these things, ergo in England there is a true church in God the Father.

The chiefest reasons that the Anabaptistes Papistes and Scismatickes vse in defacing of our church are these:

first

firſt that our miniſters bee not lawfully called: 2. that we want diſcipline: 3. that wee haue no lawfull prayers in our church, and therefor no church.

These reaſons though they be weake, and moſt weake, yet are they peeuiſh and very daungerous: and therefore I thinke it neceſſarie to confute them.

Touching the firſt wher they ſay we haue not a lawful miniſtery: I anſwere, we haue, yea and ſuch a miniſtery as is ſent of God, and lawfully called by man. I prowe it thus: whereſoeuer there is a Church in God the Father, there is alſo a lawful miniſterie. But wee haue a Church in God the Father as before is prowed, ergo, a lawful miniſterie. This argument is plainly prowed by ẏ words of Ieremie. O yee diſobedient Children turne againe ſayth the Lord, for I am your Lord, and I will take you, one of a Cittie, and two of a Tribe, and will bring you to Sion, and I will giue you Paſtors according to mine owne hart, which ſhall feede you with knowledge & vnderſtanding. Marke here, he ſaith Ier. 3. 14. 15.

he

he will chose them one of a Cittie, and two of a Tribe, and hee will bring them into Sion, that is, into his Church: hee will giue them pastors after his owne hart, these be lawful I trow, for he choseth none but those that bee meete, you may knowe them, for they feede with knowledge and vnderstanding. Whether wee do thus in the church of England or no, iudge yee.

Touching the second, that wee want discipline & therefore we are no church. I deny the argument, but they say wee haue not the discipline of the primatiue Church, therefore no church.

It is a non sequitur, for although we haue not the discipline of the primatiue Church, yet wee haue discipline: and therefore they slaunder vs. But alasse, these men that say so, they knowe not what they say: for discipline is no essentiall part of the church: men and women be the Church, not discipline, so that discipline is a wall about a citie, or a hedge aboute a vineyard, wherof though a peece sometime be broken downe, yet a

citie

citie, yet a vineyard. I graunt discipline to be as necessary in the church, to keepe the people within the railes of Moses, law, as a wall about a cittie to defende the citizens from the force of their enemie: and for my part, I know none that denieth it, but onely those that make the most to do about it: wee haue so much that they themselues complayne & crye out of it. I maruell what they would do, if we had that which they themselues seeke for. I cannot tel what they would haue: wee fynd fault with the sinnes of the people, wee excommunicate notorious offendors, if you aske by what authority, I answere euen as Paul did, so do we. Hymeneus and Alexander haue made shipwracke of faith, quos ego tradidi Sathanæ vt discant, non blasphemare: whom I (saith he) haue deliuered to Sathan that they might learne not to blaspheme: It is ỹ iudgement of ỹ best learned that euer I read of, that Peeter did excommunicate Ananias and Saphira, after the which they yelded vp ỹ ghost. 1. Tim. 1. 20. Act. 5.

I would here for my learning very

gladly know who did helpe Paul or Peter to excõmunicat, because these slaunderers of our Church do say, it is not lawful for any man to excommunicate. If it had not bin lawfull, surely Paul would not haue done it, neither yet Peter. Tertulian sayth, that excommunication, or seperation from the Church, was in his time, which was thirteene hundreth yeares agone in the handes of the Bishops, and of the Priestes. Origen commaundeth him that hath bene thrise admonished, and will not repent to be cut of from the body of the church, per ecclesiæ presides, or by the rulers of the church, wher also he declareth what the se rulers are: for sayth he, the priests sparing one that had offended, and neglecting their priestly authority, did goe about the distructiõ of the whole church, so that Origen thought it was a decay to the Church, that excommunication should goe out of the handes of the Priestes.

Tertul. in Apolog.

Orig. hom. 7. in Ios.

Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 34. Eusebius sheweth, that Fabian did excommunicate Philip the Emperour.

Ambrose did excommunicate Theodosius the Emperour, for that slaughter which was done in Thessalonica, anno Dom. 391. & is at this day greatly commended therefore of the learned, & godly. These examples proue the lawfulnes of our excommunication, which is practised vppon such like occasions, and is also executed by such kind of meanes, and therfore not to be found fault withall, neither yet that our church should be slaundered either for the want of it, either yet for the practise of that which wee haue. Touching the third, wheras they say, wee haue no lawful prayers in our Churche, and therefore no Church: that is a most abhominable slaunder, & not to bee tollerated. Of these kinde of people that say so, there be two sortes: the one be the Papistes, and they come in with their old lying antiquityes, and say that the seruice in the church of England is nothing lyke to the vse of the primatiue Church, for it hath no set order of prayers, saue a little imitation of the old Mattins and Euensong, and that

Trip. histo. lib. 9. cap. 30.

in Schisme and heresie, and therefore not onely vnprofitable, but also damnable. The other sort they say that there be no praiers at al in the church of Englande (they say so in effecte) for they say we do all read praiers already made to our handes, which by their sayings, are no prayers, neither yet do edifie at all, for (say they) reading is but bare reading yea and as ill as playing vpon a stage, and worse too. But to these I answere as I did before they slander the church, for we pray truly as God hath commaunded in his word, and as our Saviour Christ hath taught vs we pray to God the Father, and to none but to him onely. Wee come to him in the name of his sonne Jesus Christ, and in his name onely, and therefore I conclude that we pray truely. Thus haue I as God hath moued me, and at this time hath afforded vnto me, declared vnto you the sence and meaning of this holy Scripture.

The Lord graunt that it may worke that which I looke for, that is the aduancement of Gods glory, a zeale and

care

care of Gods ministers ouer the flocke of God committed vnto them. The flo-rishing estate of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the vnitie, peace, and quiet-nes of the church, that antichristianity and factiõs being defaced, we may with one hart and one voice glorifie God the Father in this world, and in the world to come raigne with him eternally by the meanes of his Sonne Jesus Christ: to whom with the Father and the holy Ghost be al praise, glory, dominion, and power both now and for euer, world without end

Amen.